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ABSTRACT

A discussion of teacher education focuses on how teachers' conceptions of classroom practice are influenced by their participation in a graduate inservice teacher education program. It is based on a longitudinal study following four high school foreign language teachers through an inservice program. Participants were observed in five phases: pre-matriculation; two consecutive summers of course work; the intervening school year, including a practicum; and the school year after the second summer's study. Data were gathered in interviews, observation, and documents written by the teachers during the program. Both intensive individual case studies and cross-case analysis were included. Results suggest that as the teachers learn to articulate their tacitly-held ideas about teaching through the shared discourse of the in-service program, they gained greater control in shaping classroom practice. Three concepts are developed in the analysis that focus on local and professional language and articulation and concepts of practice. The discussion concludes with questions on the nature of teachers' conceptions of practice and on the durability of the changes brought about by the articulation of those conceptions in professional discourse. (32 references) (MSE)

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Teacher Education and Emerging Conceptions of Practice

[Paper presented at the International Study Association on Teacher Thinking, ISATT V, University of Surrey, England, September 1991]

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Introduction

This paper is based on two assumptions. The first is that to reach a better understanding of the undefined relationship between how teachers teach and how they are taught to teach, we must understand how teachers themselves develop and shape their classroom practice. The second assumption, which follows closely from the first, is that we cannot develop such an understanding if we confine ourselves to looking at teachers' behavior, we must also look at how they think about or conceive of what they do.[1] Taken together, these two assumptions raise the broad issue of how teachers modify or improve their classroom practice through participation in teacher education. In its practical form, this issue is perhaps the central challenge in teacher education: how do we cause or enable teachers to get better at what they do?[2]

I came across a very clear statement of the problem recently which places it in a slightly different context. While waiting for one of my children

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[1] This is the central issue in what Marton [1981] calls "second-order research perspective." He defines the distinction as follows:

> In the first, and by far most commonly adopted [research] perspective, we orient ourselves towards the world and make statements about it. In the second perspective, we orient ourselves towards people's ideas about the world (or their experiences of it.) Let us call the former a **first-order** and the latter a **second-order** perspective. [171; original emphasis]

Other researchers, beginning with the major reviews of the research literature in teacher thinking [Clark & Peterson 1986; Shavelson & Stern 1981], have argued that this shift from an emphasis on the teacher's classroom behaviors to one which incorporates behavior within the individual's framework of meaningful action marks the movement from a process-product to a cognitively oriented research paradigm [Kagan 1988; Shulman 1986; see also Freeman 1990a for a discussion of this point].

[2] Kennedy [1990] refers to this as the "improvement-of-practice problem," which she names as one of the three major issues facing teacher education.

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at her music lesson, I was leafing through a magazine and came upon the following account:

> Recently while teaching a smart, imaginative, 11-year-old violin student, I was struck by the fact that as I introduced more difficult tasks for her to do, instead of discovering new movements necessary for the given task, she would try only old movements. Further she would persist in this even when she sounded bad and when it meant using great effort. <...> This led me to the conclusion that it is not really possible to improve something until one can improve one's conception of what needs to be done. In other words, every action begins by a mental process, conscious or unconscious. To improve the action, you must improve the mental process that precedes it. [Purdue 1990, 35]

In this paper, I examine the issue-- to borrow the words of the violin teacher-- of "improving [teachers'] conception[s] of what needs to be done." It reports on a study of how foreign language teachers' conceptions of their classroom practice were influenced by their participation in a graduate in-service teacher education program [Freeman 1991]. The paper draws on the findings of that study in order to introduce three key concepts which emerged from it. These concepts have potential implications in two areas: in contributing to continuing research in this area and in the design and execution of teacher education programs.

The Study

The paper is based on a longitudinal study [Freeman 1991] which followed four high-school foreign language teachers as they participated in an in-service teacher education program over the period of a year-and-a-half. The program, at the School for International Training, leads to a Master of Arts in Teaching degree in foreign languages. The study adopted a "second-order" perspective [Marton 1981] to focus on the teachers' conceptions of classroom practice, as opposed to their behavior and activity (see Footnote #1); the aim was to examine how the teachers' ways of thinking about their classroom teaching were influenced as they participated in the teacher education program.

The study used a five-phase design. It followed the four teachers from just before they matriculated into the program [Phase 1], through the two consecutive summers of course work [Phases 2 and 4], and the intervening school year in which they completed an on-the-job practicum at their home schools [Phase 3]. In the final phase, the teachers were back in their home schools, the school year after the program [Phase 5]. The data, which included

interviews, observations, and documents written by the teachers during the program, followed the development of the teachers' conceptions of their classroom practice through these five phases. The analysis included intensive case studies of each of the four teachers in which the development of their thinking was detailed; there was also a comparative analysis to examine cross-case themes among the four.

>>> Insert Figure #1 here <<<

Broadly speaking, the findings of the study suggest that as these teachers learned to articulate their tacitly held ideas about teaching through the shared discourse of the in-service program, they gained greater control in shaping their classroom practice as they chose. To elaborate those findings in greater detail, I will concentrate in this paper on three concepts which became central in the study. These concepts, which had their origin as grounded categories in the data analysis [Strauss 1987], developed as keys to organizing and to making sense out of the data [Miles & Huberman 1984]. The concepts are: the idea of contrasting professional and local languages about teaching and learning, that of articulation, and that of conception of practice.

Three Key Concepts

'Conception of practice'

The idea of "conception of practice," as it turns out, has a basis and tradition in certain types of qualitative research in education.[3] Its roots can be found in the work of Becker et al. [1961] in their classic study of medical education, *The Boys in White,* in which they examined how medical

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[3] Both of the teacher socialization and the teacher thinking literatures share a concern with the actors'-- in most instances teachers-- understanding of and mental orientation towards their actions. The teacher socialization literature which departs from the functionalist perspective, in which the individual is seen as being shaped by the institutions with which he or she has contact, has dealt with the idea that teachers interact with settings and with their own backgrounds to develop a 'perspective' through socialization [Etheridge 1988; Ross 1987; Crow 1986]. Similarly much of the teacher thinking literature deals with teachers' conceptions of practice, although these conceptions are variously labeled depending on the researchers' orientation. See Freeman [1990] for a review of this literature organized into five conceptions of practice, to highlight their similarities and differences. In a similar review, Clandinin & Connelly [1987] focus on a subset of that literature which deals with the idea of teachers' 'personal' knowledge.

FIGURE #1

A Summary of the Phases, Data, and Structure of the Study
[Freeman 1991]

Dates	Phase	Data	In-service Program
Spring 1989	Pre-Program	Interviews; observations	[Prior to matriculation, in home school]
Summer 1989	Summer #1	Interviews; document analysis of written work	First summer of course work
School year 1989-1990	Interim Year	Interviews; observations; document analysis	Interim Year on-the-job practicum teaching at home school
Summer 1990	Summer #2	Interviews; document analysis of written work	Second summer of course work
Fall 1990	Post-Program	Interviews; observations	Completed course work; thesis preparation

students developed what the researchers called their "perspectives" on medical practice. Becker et al. [1961, 34] defined the term, 'perspective,' as "a coordinated set of ideas and actions [which] a person uses in dealing with some problematic situation, ... [It is] a person's ordinary way of thinking and feeling about and acting in such a situation." They referred to Shibutani [1955, 564], a sociologist, who talked about perspective as "an ordered view of one's world, what is take for granted about ... objects, events, and human nature." Both researchers used the idea of perspective as a bridge between the person's internal sense-making and his or her actions in the world.

However there is an interesting and useful divergence between Becker et al. and Shibutani on the function of such perspectives. Becker et al. spoke of perspectives as being triggered by "problematic situations," times when they are not constrained by the environment or habitual patterns to act in a particular way. Shibutani [1955, 34], on the other hand, saw the person's perspective as constant and intrinsic:

> It is an order of things remembered and expected as well as things actually perceived, an organized conception of what is plausible and what is possible; <..> The fact that men [sic] have such ordered perspectives enables them to conceive of their ever-changing world as relatively stable, orderly, and predictable.

Thus while Becker et al. focused on the perspective as forged out of a situation which required the individual to take new or out-of-the-ordinary courses of action, Shibutani saw it as a on-going construct which guided the individual's actions.[4]

The idea of a conception of practice developed in this study borrows from both views. Like Shibutani, it assumes that teachers have ways of thinking about what they do which are "organized conception[s] of what is plausible and what is possible...," whether or not those ways are articulated or seem coherent to observers. Like Becker et al., it also assumes that these ways of thinking are somehow affected when teachers come in contact with new situations. Thus teachers' conceptions of practice help them to organize what they know and to map out what is possible; these conceptions also guide teachers in the face of the new or problematic in their classrooms.

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[4] It is interesting to note that Shibutani's definition seems closer to Marton's [1981, 178] second-order research orientation towards "people's ideas about the world." See Footnote #1.

How to uncover the teachers' conceptions of practice and how to document them was a basic issue in this study. It is difficult to get teachers to identify what is routine in their thinking; however when faced by a problematic situation, the assumptions of what is usual or 'normal' often begin to emerge. This thinking seems to fall into what I have referred to as tensions. These are divergences among different forces or elements in the teacher's perception of the school context, the content itself, or the students; they are expressed as discomforts or confusions which interfere with the teacher's carrying intention into action in the classroom.[5] In one example of a tension, Ann talks before entering the program about Spanish as it is taught as content and as it is used in the world outside the classroom. She says, *"Everything I liked and learned [about Spanish] was outside the classroom, and [I'm] trying to bring that into the classroom. It's not in the book, and it's tough to heighten students' awareness of the outside world and get them as excited about it as I was living it, but through the classroom."* [AT: I: 6/27/89]

Thus the study examined how taking part in the teacher education program contributed to the development of the teachers' recognition and understanding of such tensions and thus to their clarification of their conception of practice. Here the second concept, that of articulation, became critical.

Articulation

Articulation, in its usual dictionary definition, refers to something being "made clear, distinct, and precise in relation to other parts; having a meaningful relation to other parts; having parts or distinct areas organized

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[5] Other researchers have represented teachers' thinking in terms of the conflicts within it [see Freeman 1990, 43-50]. Berlak and Berlak [1981], Lyons [1990], and Lampert [1986; 1985] talk about "dilemmas" in teachers' thought; while Wagner [1987] describes the conflicts as "knots." In perhaps the earliest reference of this kind, Berlak et al. [1981] describe sets of social and institutional dilemmas which are embedded in teachers' classroom actions, while Lyons, Lampert, and Wagner narrow the focus to the individual teacher. Lyons [1990] examines "moral dilemmas" embedded in instruction. For Lampert, a "dilemma" represents "an argument between opposing tendencies within oneself [as teacher] in which neither side can come out the winner" [1985, 110], while for Wagner "knots" come from the emotional and intellectual imperatives which teachers feel they should act on in their teaching. Tensions however are not experienced nor, in the pre-program data, expressed as oppositions.

into a coherent or meaningful whole, unified."[6] In this study, the idea refers to the process of clarifying and distinguishing aspects of the teacher's conception of practice which had previously been indistinguishable or had no clear connection to one another.

The concept of articulation emerges as central in the study; it describes the process, gained through participation in the teacher education program, in which the teachers gain access to their thinking about their classroom practice. The term does not imply that the teachers were somehow tongue-tied or inarticulate previously, but rather that they lacked access to a new means of conceptualizing their teaching. This means was provided as they started to use the professional language of the teacher education program. Thus they could have two ways of talking about their teaching: the professional language of their training and the local language of their previous experience.

Contrasting Local and Professional Language

The concept of discourse provides a useful starting point in framing the third concept. In his work on the development of literacy, sociolinguist James Gee introduces the concept of Discourses,[7] which he defines as "ways of being in the world, ... forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities..." [1989, 6-7]. Thus each Discourse is "a sort of 'identity kit' which comes complete with [ways] to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize." [Gee 1990, 142]. Gee makes the point that

> Each social institution commands and demands one or more Discourses and we acquire these fluently to the extent that we are given access to these institutions and are allowed apprenticeships within them. [8]

The third key concept to emerge in this study is the contrast between the two types of language-- the teachers' local language and the professional language of the teacher education program- both of which function to express and to shape the teachers' thinking about their teaching. Here Gee's

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[6] The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, unabridged [1987; 2nd edition; New York: Random House]

[7] Gee capitalizes this Discourse to distinguish it from "'discourse' with a little 'd' [which means connected stretches of language that make sense." [1989, 6]

definition of Discourse provides a useful starting point in understanding the function and interrelation of these languages. Local language provides the vehicle through which the teachers explain what goes on in their teaching on a daily basis; it is the means of expressing the de facto conceptions of practice which they bring to the in-service program. This language is local in the sense that it springs from two sources: the teachers' own experiences as students, which provides their "apprenticeship of observation" [Lortie 1975] as teachers, and from the ways of talking and thinking about teaching and learning which are prevalent in their home school environments.[8]

These two often overlapping sources of language combine in a Discourse in Gee's terms to create "an identity kit" for their work as teachers. The identity expressed in local language provides the teachers with a self-perception and a functioning social role within the school environment. [Gee 1990, 142]. However this local language offers them rather static and limited explanations of classroom practice. It does provide for expression of the understandings prior to entering the teacher education program. Operating as the teachers' primary Discourse in Gee's terms, the local language exists as tacit, unreflected conceptions of their classroom practice. Upon matriculation however, the teachers meet a second, contrasting language. They encounter the teacher education program's ways of conceiving of teaching and learning which are expressed in the professional language of that community.

This professional language is itself a Discourse, built upon a set of socially constructed facts [Fleck 1935/1979] and procedures [Swales 1990, 24-27].[9] Articulation comes then in combining terms from both languages. In this process, the teachers use the professional language of the teacher education program, which is largely new to them, to reflect on, analyze, and critique their local language explanations for their practice. Thus the study illuminates the actual mechanism of reflection often refered to in current work on teacher education [Schon 1983, 1991; Clift et al. 1990]. Such a process is not

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[8] In the study [Freeman 1991], I refer to these two sources as norms of experience and norms of environment respectively. Roth [1987], in a study of in-service training for middle school science teachers, compares how these norms seem to filter and transform the new information about pedagogy and content which the teachers are receiving.

[9] See Freeman & Cazden [1990] for a fuller discussion of this point.

neutral however. The professional language offers the teachers a different set of values and status, a new "identity kit." The professional language serves as a metalanguage through which the teachers can evaluate, critique, and thus transform concepts in the local language. Thus when professional language and local language explanations of teaching meet, under certain circumstances, the local language is irreversibly changed.[10]

Illustrating the three concepts: Two examples

I want now to turn to two examples, drawn from the four case studies in the project, which illustrate these three key concepts. Although the concepts themselves were derived from a grounded analysis of the data from the four teachers, I think it is clearer to illustrate them here within the coherence of individual cases. The first example, from the teacher Carol, shows the process of articulation in which a local language idea is rendered in the shared terms of the teacher education program. The second, from the teacher Ann, shows the emergence of her conception of practice through this process of articulation.

Articulation: Carol defining the 'comfort zone'

Carol's development of the concept of *"the comfort zone,"* is an instance of articulation. In it, the tacitly held ideas about teaching which she expressed in her own local language are given voice in the shared professional discourse of the teacher education program. In an interview during the first weeks of the program[11], Carol refers to her experience in the core course on second language teaching methodology. The course is designed to help participants "develop a personal approach to language teaching".[12] In it, they examine five methodologies through an iterative series of experiences which begins with being a language learner taught in the methodology, and is followed by discussion, peer teaching in the methodology, further discussion and analysis, and culminates in a brief first-

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10 Gee [1989, 9] discussed this point in relation to what he calls the development of literacies.

11 This is Phase 2 of the study; see Figure #1.

12 MAT Program handbook, (1989), course description of "Approaches to Teaching Second Languages."

person paper about what has been significant in the methodology [see Freeman 1991, 238ff]

Through successive cycles in the course, Carol articulates her tacitly held notion of the place of 'comfort' in learning. She uses terms from the professional language she finds around her to express, with increasing coherence and conviction, this aspect of her experience as a learner and its meaning in her teaching. I have presented her description of the process from the interview, side-by-side with the analysis.

*"Up until now, [A]I keep talking about this strange thing called 'the comfort zone.' I didn't know what it was; [B]**it was just a feeling that I was looking for.** <...> I kept searching for something.*

Carol starts with a feeling (B) which she explains in her own local language terms (A).

[C]As we went through [two methodologies], I kept feeling more and more of it, but I just couldn't get a grasp... [on it] Papers would come back with a 'Well, define it,' and I couldn't. [Last night] I realized that

*the [D]**security** and [E]**comfort** for me as a student would mean the technique would allow for [F]**student initiative**.*

Over a two-week process (C), she begins to articulate the feeling (B) into a statement. The faculty member pushes her-- unwittingly-- to use shared professional language to make her idea accessible to others. So she uses a concept from that language, (D), which she links to her own word (E), and defines with another term from the discourse (F). This term (F) comes from reading.[13]

*For me, [G]**student initiative creates security if it's given slowly**. I realized that's what I was talking about: [H]**I was looking for 'initiative' and didn't know the word [for it].**"*
[CB: I: 7/28/89]

She concludes with a full statement in the professional language (G), and acknowledges the role of the shared discourse in enabling her to articulate her idea (H).

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13 See Stevick [1980, 19ff]

In her weekly paper, Carol again summarizes the process of articulating her idea of 'comfort' in the shared language of the program. Here she is more explicit in her use of the professional language, in bold below, to articulate her thinking about this aspect of her teaching.[14]

> As I move through each of these second language teaching techniques presented in Approaches class, I find my quest for a **comfort zone** becoming more well-defined. Looking back on the three– ALM, Silent Way, and Natural Approach-- I discover that **student initiative affects security**. In other words, I believe that the more likely an approach is to gradually develop **initiative**, the more inclined a student is to **become comfortable** with the second language learning. <...> The teacher through **careful control (class structure of time, objectives, techniques)** builds an atmosphere where students' individual learning needs may be realized. **"Careful control"** implies that the teacher is aware/ sensitive to the moments when **initiative** is best utilized and by which students.
>
> **The balance of control/ initiative** on the part of the teacher is important because, just as it can **"comfort"** students, it is also possible to foster inadequacy by presenting to students too big a challenge before they are prepared for it. [CB: P: 7/28/89]

It is interesting that Carol seems able to recognize the development and the seeming value to her of the process of articulation as it is happening, as she moves her ideas from their tacit form into the shared professional language of the community. Even as she reformulates her ideas, she develops and changes them thus shaping her thinking about teaching. In the second example, it becomes clear how this process of articulation shapes the teacher's conception of practice.

Conception of Practice: **Ann rethinks a reading lesson and its implications**

This example, which is in two parts, is drawn from data from the second summer of the teacher education program.[15] At this point, the four teachers have completed two thirds of their studies: the first summer, from

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[14] In fact, the interview took place in the afternoon and Carol had drafted the paper the evening before. Thus she is reporting orally what she has just written about.

[15] This is Phase 4, see Figure #1.

which the previous example is taken, and the interim year during which they have returned to teach at their home schools and have corresponded and been observed by a faculty member from the program.[16] The example illustrates how the conception of practice functions in two dimensions as Ann begins to rethink her teaching and her view of her students. The first part illustrates how something which is 'problematic' in the teacher's conception, in this case from her teaching during the preceding school year, is articulated in a new way, leading in turn to a shift in the conception itself.

The Problematic: "How could we have known that?" [the student demanded]

In a paper for a course on teaching second language reading and writing, Ann revisits an incident in a fourth-year Spanish class. Her description shows a new and different understanding of what happened:

> I had a student who provided very informative feedback as I was explaining the background around some of the more difficult Spanish [in a reading text]: "How could we have known that?" [the student demanded] I responded, "You couldn't have. But I didn't expect you to." To which she replied, "I didn't know I wasn't supposed to know that."
>
> In other words, her **schema for that reading level** didn't exist. She didn't know enough about the vocabulary, the form of writing, or the dialects of Spanish to distinguish the language as unique. Apart from that, she had been **reading at a Stage 1 level** with the text. She was **decoding words** so intensely that she had **missed all the meaning**. This **bottom-up approach** is characterized in the saying 'she couldn't see the forest for the trees.' [P: 7/10/90]

In using technical terms about reading from the course (in bold above), Ann builds a new explanation for why the student was confused and the interaction which resulted. She now writes about it, in professional language, as illustrating the complexity of the reading process and what the student brings to learning rather than as a breakdown in classroom discipline.

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[16] See Figure #1, Phase #3.

In the same paper, Ann-- like Carol-- is explicit about the process of articulation: the fact that the new professional vocabulary has helped her to define and express what had been shadowy feelings about her lessons:

> I think now having these stages will help me [A]**to visualize** a more hierarchical progression. <...> As I read Chall's description of the stages [of reading] [Chall 1983], [A']**I see the logic whereas** [B]**before I just had the feeling that something wasn't right.** I didn't know how to back up or whether discipline would bring them [students] around. [C]**Now I can see** that not being able to read doesn't mean they're not trying. It tells me I have to find what level they're reading at and work in that stage to develop the skills needed to move into the next stage. [P: 7/10/90]

She describes articulation in visual terms: she *"sees the logic"* (**A'**) or *"visualizes"* (**A**) what had been an intuition (**B**) about what was happening in the lesson. In a sense the new view of the reading process, and the terminology in which it is expressed, allows Ann to see her feelings, and thus to begin to explain them (**C**).

The On-going: "My teaching style had been to read the story and ask comprehension questions."

As the paper continues, it shows the second, on-going dimension of the conception of practice, what Shibutani called the individual's "organized conception of what is plausible and what is possible..." In articulating her thinking in a new conceptual vocabulary, Ann finds that her understanding of teaching is also changed. Using local language which echoes the abbreviated notes of a lesson plan, she talks about her previous conception of practice as a linear one: *"My teaching style had been to read the story and ask comprehension questions."* In her usual reading lessons, she writes:

> I used to just work with unknown vocabulary as a pre-reading skill then give reading assignments. I would then discuss anything the students didn't understand. I knew this was ineffective but now I have a better idea why. <..> There had never been much time to interact with the text nor did I provide a better purpose in my lesson objective other than to read. [P: 7/13/90]

In this earlier conception, the content of the lessons was the new vocabulary, and the students were responsible for understanding the words and through them, the passage itself.

The local language is very evident here. Ann uses a number of voices-- the textbook teacher's guide, the instructions she may have heard as a student and given as a teacher in such lessons-- to narrate this routine view of teaching:[17]

Study a lot of vocabulary. Have the students go home and read the first part [of the text]. Come back and talk in English about what they understood-- which is usually nothing or very little. Try to piece those pieces together in English and then say, 'OK, read along with me and stop me anytime you don't understand,' or 'Let's try answering these questions...' 'OK read silently again;' 'Now, let's try to answer these questions...' 'A little bit better?' 'OK, read part two for tonight.' and so on... [I: 7/20/90]

Against this local language view of her teaching, the language of the teacher education program provides Ann with a means of reflection and critique. As she expresses her emerging thinking in this Discourse, she articulates her conception of teaching. Ann now writes about the content of reading lessons as *"skill-building,"* in contrast to the local language view, expressed above, that reading is putting words together through translation into text.

> I now believe that [A]students should be made aware of having **decoding skills, top-down and bottom-up strategies, skimming and scanning skills,** etc. so they can transfer them to other readings. <...> I'd like my students to see reading as an active process. If not, the written page will look like a pile of mere words which are meant to be decoded. Reading assignments would simply be completed for the sake of completion. I am sensing that [B]**it is the teacher who inspires a purpose and a sense of meaning to most reading** until a student is trained to do so on his own. [P: 7/13/90]

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[17] The allusion to Bahktin [1981] here is intentional. In analyzing the interaction of local language and professional language in forming the teacher's conception of practice, I have found the Bahktinian concept of voice applicable and very useful [see Freeman 1991, 288ff].

This new view of content in reading weaves together two themes: one of student ability (A), and the other of teacher responsibility (B). Together these themes create a more complex view of learning to read in a second language than the previous local language view of *"read the story and ask comprehension questions."*

This newly articulated view shows a central tension in Ann's emerging conception of practice, one which she has grappled with throughout the past two years. When she viewed reading-- and by extension teaching generally-- as assembling the meaning of the text through vocabulary, the students' lack of knowledge was actually the teacher's strength and the content of her lesson. Now as she views reading and teaching as *"skill-building,"* her aim as teacher changes. Her role is no longer to measure difference between the students' and her own respective levels of knowledge, but rather to replicate her own skills as a reader-- and by extension as a user of the target language-- in her students.

> I feel I truly know something when I can articulate it enough to teach it to someone else. Prior to this course, I wouldn't have been able to explain how I read, I only knew that I did. Now I feel empowered to improve my own skills as well as to open the door for my students to learn to read with greater feeling. **There has been so much pleasure in my reading yet I have not known how to share the feeling with my students.** [P: 7/13/90]

However Ann senses the tensions which this new way of being as a teacher may bring in practice. She seems aware that articulating this new conception of practice in words is one step in the process of change; articulating the conception in actions follows. She knows she will face conflicts with the structural demands of the school curriculum and its normative ways of teaching and learning. She says, *"I've never taught reading and writing; I assigned reading and writing. Now if I want to teach [it] I just feel like I might get into some old patterns. <...> Wanting them to just produce-- 'Go ahead read... what'd you get out of it?'-- quickening the pace too much."* [I: 7/20/90] Ann distinguishes her emerging conception, which she calls *"teaching"* from her de facto notion, which she expressed in local language as *"read the story and ask comprehension questions."* To teach reading is to be responsive to learners; to do so, she feels she must use

knowledge of her own processes as a reader and writer to guide her work with students. To assign reading and writing is a custodial process which focuses on the issues of classroom control and management.

Closing: Two Questions

The analysis of the concepts of local and professional language, articulation and conceptions of practice from this study raises two important questions with which I close this paper. The first question concerns the nature of teachers' conceptions of practice; the second has to do with the durability of the changes brought about by the articulation of those conceptions in professional discourse.

In the first instance, it is interesting to consider whether conceptions of practice exist a priori but on a tacit level, and become explicit through the processes of teacher education. Certainly the concept of local language as a de facto expression of the teachers' thinking suggests that elements of the conception are present throughout the teacher's life and that they find their way into expression in the new professional language, as with Carol's idea of the "comfort zone." However there is a second possibility, that the conceptions are formed directly through participation in the teacher education program itself, as with Ann's analysis of the reading lesson.

As is evident from the two examples, this study suggests that both processes are taking place simultaneously and interactively. Voiced in local language, the teachers' explanations derived from their experience as students and as teachers in their school environments only become apparent to them when thrown into relief by the new professional language of the in-service program. In that contrast, they are both articulated and may be recast or changed. The new professional language of the program provides a different Discourse, in Gee's sense of the term. The new Discourse provides an alternative "identity kit" which allows the teacher to recognize what she thinks, while reorganizing and critiquing it.

Carol talks quite explicitly about the role of the new Discourse in the development of her thinking about teaching. In the last interview of the second summer, she talks about the effects on her thinking of the program

Discourse. She refers to the professional language as *"jargon,"* although not in its usual pejorative sense:

At least if there's a word associated to what I'm thinking about, it makes me feel good because I know it means I'm not the only one. It's not a unique situation; I'm not the only one experiencing it. It does exist. Other teachers are having the same problems with the same thing that's happening in their classroom or to them. It helps organize things. <...> It helps with my thinking process. [CB: I: 8/20/90]

Carol's observation unites the two main functions of participating in a shared language. There is a social-referential function of becoming a member of a group, and there is the cognitive function of organizing one's conceptual world according to the values and meanings of that community [see Freeman & Cazden 1990]. She points out that the two functions are in fact intertwined: using the language makes you part of the group which thinks about and acts upon teaching in a particular way. So the process of articulating a conception of practice is not a linear one in which the teacher reveals what she already knows from her local language explanations of practice. Instead it seems to be dialectical, in which the familiar and tacit knowledge interacts with-- and is reshaped by-- newly explicit understandings from the professional Discourse.

Given this interaction, the second question about the durability of the changes vested in the teachers' newly articulated views of teaching and learning becomes far more complex than simply evaluating their actions and behaviors. Clearly talking a new line may not mean teaching in new ways. How talk relates to-- or is perhaps a form of-- change in action is an interesting issue. On this point, the study is inconclusive. However it does raises important points regarding articulation and change.

First, if articulation involves recasting and developing ideas in a new Discourse-- the shared professional language of the teacher education program-- and if a Discourse is as Gee says "a saying(writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing combination" [1989, 6], then articulation cannot be confined to an oral or written process. In fact, articulating a conception of practice in words, and articulating it in actions are intimately connected parts of the same on-going process. Thus when looking for change in teachers'

practice, if we limit ourselves to their classroom behaviors we may miss fledgling and emerging developments in their new ways of thinking. In this study, there were changes in specific aspects of the four teachers' behavior; however there were also enduring patterns or routines in their pedagogy.

This question of durability of change fostered by teacher education programs or other interventions poses issues about the nature of change itself: change in what-- in the teachers' conceptions of practice or in the classroom practices themselves, and how are changes in the two connected. It may well be mistaken and misleading to think of changes in thought as leading to changes in activity. Rather articulating news ways of doing things, in words and in actions, may both be forms of practicing and eventually mastering the new professional "identity kit" of the teacher education Discourse.

Here the study makes an interesting contribution. Its "second-order perspective"[18] provides a window into the experience and the process of change in teaching for the four teachers. Change was examined within a view of classroom teaching which assumed an interconnection of thought and activity as equal components of practice. Thus the study highlighted the development of teachers' thought as major component of that practice. Within this view, the notion of change becomes more complicated, since it is no longer possible to simply use behavior as the criterion by which to gain access to or assess it.

This takes us back to the assumptions with which I opened this paper. If what teachers do is understood solely as activity, it is possible to miss the complexity of their understandings of teaching and how these may affect their practice. If change means doing things differently, it assumes a view of teaching as activity. Thus it overlooks how teachers' understandings may themselves be modified or amended, possibly without external changes in what they do. All of which leads to teacher education. If it is seen exclusively as the inculcation of knowledge and skills, we may fail to recognize and examine the potential of its most powerful and influential effects. It may be

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[18] See Footnote #1.

that the effects of teacher education lie less in influencing teachers' behavior than in recasting their conceptions of practice.

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